

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.					
1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 10 May 2007		2. REPORT TYPE FINAL		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Know Your Enemy and Know Yourself: Assessing Progress in Developing Cultural Competence to Enhance Operational Effectiveness				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Sean T. Keene, Major, USAF				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Joint Military Operations Department Naval War College 686 Cushing Road Newport, RI 02841-1207				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Distribution Statement A: Approved for public release; Distribution is unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.					
14. ABSTRACT Culture has always been a key factor in military operations; it is in not just a fad that has recently become important because of unique characteristics of the Global War on Terror and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Thousands of years ago, the writer of <i>The Art of War</i> highlighted the critical nature of cultural competence when he asserted his formula for military success, "know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril." In the last few years, the United States Government has recognized the demand for greater language and regional expertise, and attempted to correct these deficiencies by instituting a few key initiatives. Will the nation's recent culture-focused initiatives suffice in meeting the demands for cultural competence necessary to enhance the effectiveness of Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs) in conducting operations in the international security environment of the 21st century? This paper analyzes these initiatives and assesses that they fall short of transforming cultural competence within the armed forces of the United States in order to ensure success at the operational level. This paper recommends several additional actions to achieve greater cultural competence to better enable the GCCs.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Cultural Competence, Language Skills, Regional Expertise, Culture, Culture-Centric					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 24	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON Chairman, JMO Department
a. REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	b. ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED	c. THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) 401-841-3556

**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, R.I.**

**KNOW YOUR ENEMY AND KNOW YOURSELF: ASSESSING PROGRESS IN
DEVELOPING CULTURAL COMPETENCE TO ENHANCE OPERATIONAL
EFFECTIVENESS**

by

**Sean T. Keene
Major, USAF**

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: _____

10 May 2007

ABSTRACT

Culture has always been a key factor in military operations; it is not just a fad that has recently become important because of unique characteristics of the Global War on Terror and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Thousands of years ago, the writer of *The Art of War* highlighted the critical nature of cultural competence when he asserted his formula for military success, "know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril." In the last few years, the United States Government has recognized the demand for greater language and regional expertise, and attempted to correct these deficiencies by instituting a few key initiatives. Will the nation's recent culture-focused initiatives suffice in meeting the demands for cultural competence necessary to enhance the effectiveness of Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs) in conducting operations in the international security environment of the 21st century? This paper analyzes these initiatives and assesses that they fall short of transforming cultural competence within the armed forces of the United States in order to ensure success at the operational level. This paper recommends several additional actions to achieve greater cultural competence to better enable the GCCs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
The Need for Cultural Transformation	2
Waking Up to Reality	5
Assessing Progress	8
Capturing the Deficiencies	10
The Path to Effectiveness	12
Conclusion	15
Notes	17
Bibliography	20

Introduction

The 2005 National Defense Strategy (NDS) declared that the United States has "no global peer competitor and will remain unmatched in traditional military capability."¹ In every conflict since World War II, the United States has had the advantage of superior combat power over its enemies on the battlefield. Given this advantage, one would expect the United States, whether fighting alone or as part of a coalition, to enjoy an unbeaten record in war over that timeframe. However, a few conflicts over the last four decades have highlighted a critical weakness in the military prowess of the United States, and the current conflict in Iraq has brought that critical weakness to the forefront. This critical weakness is cultural competence at the operational level.

This paper considers cultural competence as both an "understanding of a people or nation's history, institutions, psychology, beliefs, and behaviors" as well as the linguistic skills necessary to communicate with a particular people group.² This consideration is supported by David Kilcullen, who points out in his article on Countering Global Insurgency, "Culture is intimately connected with language, since humans use language to make sense of reality and communicate meaning."³ In the excerpt above from the most recent NDS, it seems clear that the writers did not consider cultural competence as a traditional military capability, because history has shown that the United States has been outmatched by the challenges of culture in international security affairs.

However, with all the attention focused on the quagmire in Iraq, the United States Government has recognized the deficiencies in cultural competence and taken some steps to address the problem. In order to support the policy as outlined in the 2006 National Security Strategy of the United States of seeking and supporting "democratic movements and

institutions in every nation and culture," the national leadership is putting greater emphasis on language skills and regional expertise.⁴ In the last few years, the United States Government has recognized the demand for greater language and regional expertise, and attempted to correct these deficiencies by instituting a few key initiatives. Will the nation's recent culture-focused initiatives suffice in meeting the demands for cultural competence necessary to enhance the effectiveness of Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs) in conducting operations in the international security environment of the 21st century? This paper analyzes these initiatives and assesses that they fall short of transforming cultural competence within the armed forces of the United States in order to ensure success at the operational level. This paper recommends several steps to achieve greater cultural competence to better enable the GCCs. Short of these changes, the United States will continue to meddle around in the margins and run the risk of peril on the battlefield.

The Need for Cultural Transformation

Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril.

- Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

Culture has always been a key factor in military operations; it is not just a fad that has recently become important because of unique characteristics of the Global War on Terror (GWOT) and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF). Cultural competence is not only critical in war, but also important to enabling the range of military operations conducted by GCCs, especially theater security cooperation, operational planning, and conducting coalition operations of all types. Without understanding the culture of an enemy, how can one expect to determine accurately an enemy's center of gravity or to influence enemy leaders through information operations? Considering cultural factors at the operational level can help minimize friction and the fog of war, help avoid creating more enemies, and help enhance

peacetime cooperation in order to achieve greater coalition cohesiveness during crises.

The increasing globalization of human society and the many vital interests of the United States around the world require greater finesse than ever before in dealing with international affairs. Cultural competence is the key enabler in achieving greater finesse, especially at the operational level. As outlined in the NDS, "International partnerships continue to be a principal source of our strength," and this strength affords the advantages of access and influence worldwide.⁵ The United States will continue to enjoy this advantage only if it can meet the demands of cultural competence in future military operations. The success of the United States in the international security environment depends on developing and maintaining a global security network of partners in every region. Cultural competence is critical to fostering this cooperation to promote stability and security around the world.

*Transformation has been interpreted as exclusively technological, but against an enemy who fights unconventionally...it is more important to understand motivation, intent, method, and culture than to have a few more meters of precision, knots of speed, or bits of bandwidth.*⁶

- Major General Robert H. Scales Jr., U.S. Army (Retired), October 2004

In his article titled "Culture-Centric Warfare," Major General (Retired) Robert Scales relates a story about a discussion he had with a commander of the Army's Third Infantry Division upon his return from Iraq.⁷ Scales asked the commander about his situational awareness during the march to Baghdad at the beginning of OIF. The commander stated that he "knew where every enemy tank was dug in on the outskirts of Tallil," but that his soldiers "had to fight fanatics charging on foot or in pickups and firing AK-47s and [rocket propelled grenades]...I had perfect situational awareness...What I lacked was cultural awareness...Great technical intelligence...wrong enemy."⁸ Of course, we know now that this was a foreshadowing of even greater cultural challenges that the American forces would face as the operation transitioned to the post-conflict phase. One could argue that the

commander in this case did not have perfect situational awareness, because he and his unit were not prepared for the kind of enemy they would face. To have true situational awareness, this commander needed cultural awareness. This deficiency is attributable to the lack of cultural competence applied during the operational planning effort.

In the same article, General Scales also noted feedback from other senior officers upon their return from Iraq and Afghanistan who shared that "great advantage can be achieved by out-thinking rather than out-equipping the enemy...by creating alliances, leveraging nonmilitary advantages, reading intentions, building trust, converting opinions, and managing perceptions—all tasks that demand an exceptional ability to understand people, their culture, and their motivation."⁹ The statements of these senior officers make a clear argument for the advantages of cultural competence in the range of military operations. The tragedy of these accounts is that it seems these lessons were only learned after the difficulty encountered in these operations and a significant number of lives lost. In studying past wars, military officers are repeatedly reminded about the reality of the cultural influence on the outcome, regardless of the type of conflict. In more recent historical examples, the importance of culture in military operations was demonstrated in the American experiences in Vietnam, Somalia, and Kosovo. The lessons of the need for cultural competence at the operational level seem to have been too quickly forgotten or not taken seriously in the planning for the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In the OIF case, senior government officials and military leaders seem to have overlooked sage advice from Clausewitz, who cautioned military leaders "not to take the first step without considering the last."¹⁰ This failure was evident in the post-conflict phase and the subsequent occupation. Sadly, this problem resulted from the fact that "almost no Middle

Eastern experts inside the military were consulted on the war plan, in part because the plan was produced on a very close hold basis that involved few people, and even then only parts of it were shown to most of those involved."¹¹ The few experts who had studied the Iraq situation and could have assisted the post-war planning were dismissed from participating due to their political views.¹² Consequently, the war plan was criticized for its incompleteness and blamed for fostering conditions that facilitated the difficult security environment throughout Iraq after the fall of Baghdad.¹³ The joint force was unprepared for the cultural challenges encountered during the post-conflict phase, due to the lack of cultural considerations during operational planning. The "high-tech" capabilities of the United States forces won the war, but their lack of cultural competence has severely hampered their ability to win the peace.

Waking Up to Reality

The extensive media coverage and numerous books written about the on-going operations detail the failure to consider cultural factors in operational planning. However, senior government officials and military leaders would likely argue that they have since recognized the need to foster greater cultural awareness among the armed forces and develop more language and cultural expertise. The following paragraphs will outline the key initiatives that represent the national leadership's attempt to address these shortfalls and the steps they take in attempting developing cultural competence among the joint forces.

*Language skill and regional expertise...are as important as critical weapon systems.*¹⁴
- Defense Language Transformation Roadmap (January 2005)

The Defense Language Transformation Roadmap outlines four goals for language transformation: "(1) create foundational language and cultural expertise in the officer, civilian, and enlisted ranks for both Active and Reserve Components; (2) create the capacity

to surge language and cultural resources beyond these foundational and in-house capabilities; (3) establish a cadre of proficient language specialists; and (4) establish a process to track the accession, separation and promotion rates of language professionals and Foreign Area Officers (FAOs)."¹⁵ Associated with these goals are over forty required actions; three of the most noteworthy of these actions include: (1) "ensuring doctrine, policies, and planning guidance reflect the need for language requirements in operational, contingency, and stabilization planning,"¹⁶ (2) "require COCOMs to identify linguistic and translator requirements as part of their contingency and deliberate planning processes for operations and plans,"¹⁷ and (3) "making foreign language ability a criterion for general officer or flag officer advancement."¹⁸ Though it contains many creditable initiatives, this roadmap has not yet created a transformation. As an example, Joint Publication 3-0, *Joint Operations*, and Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning*, were published more than a year and a half after this roadmap and each contains only a few "boiler plate" paragraphs on language, culture, and regional expertise.

Announced in January 2006, the National Security Language Initiative identified cultural competence and international engagement as "essential components of the U.S. national security effort in the post-9/11 world."¹⁹ This initiative outlines a comprehensive national plan among the Departments of Education, State, Defense, and the Director of National Intelligence in expanding foreign language education in the United States.²⁰ To that end, President Bush requested 114 million dollars for fiscal year 2007 for this initiative, which will employ these resources to educate students and teachers at all levels and government workers in critical need foreign languages, such as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean.²¹ In addition, this plan calls for a three-year pilot program, called the Civilian

Linguist Reserve Corps, which will recruit and maintain a pool of 1,000 members with certified expertise in languages determined to be important to the security of the nation.²² It is important to establish a pipeline of foreign language speakers within the United States, and if funded, this initiative will begin that critical endeavor. However, the targeted number of students, teachers, and government workers is based on fiscal constraints rather than actual requirements for foreign language proficiency.

Shortly after the announcement of the National Security Language Initiative, the Joint Staff published Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction (CJCSI) 3126.01, *Language and Regional Expertise and Planning* (23 January 2006). This instruction implements several of the required actions in order to support the goal to "Create Foundational Language and Regional Area Expertise" as identified in the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap.²³ The purpose of this instruction is to provide "comprehensive guidance and procedures to COCOMs for identifying foreign language and regional expertise requirements during COCOMs' operational and security cooperation planning efforts, and planning for day-to-day manning needs in support of operations."²⁴ In support of the operational planning process, the Services and United States Special Operations Command are tasked to "develop and provide standard capability metrics to aid operation planners in determining language and regional expertise requirements based on mission and workload."²⁵ This instruction provides a well-defined methodology for identifying language and regional expertise requirements at the operational level, but the concern is whether or not the Services will be able to meet the needs for cultural competence identified by operational planners in the future.

*The Department must foster a level of understanding and cultural intelligence about the Middle East and Asia comparable to that developed about the Soviet Union during the Cold War.*²⁶

-Quadrennial Defense Review Report (2006)

The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) report also identified several critical actions necessary to remedy the "legacy of relatively limited emphasis on languages."²⁷ The report calls for greater resources and emphasis on recruiting native and heritage speakers, requiring language training and expanding immersion opportunities for scholarship students at Service Academies and in Reserve Officer Training Corps programs, increasing incentive pay for foreign language proficiency, and improving language and cultural awareness training for deploying forces.²⁸ The QDR summarizes the importance of greater cultural awareness and language skills by acknowledging that "victory in this long war depends on information, perception, and how and what we communicate as much as application of kinetic effects....cultural and language capabilities also enhance effectiveness in a coalition setting during conventional operations."²⁹ Though this report outlines some key opportunities for broadening linguistic capabilities, it fails to offer any solutions for equipping the operational level with cultural competence.

Assessing Progress

*All of our efforts in Iraq, military and civilian, are handicapped by Americans' lack of language and cultural understanding.*³⁰

- The Iraq Study Group Report (December 2006)

This astute conclusion of the Iraq Study Group was based on their observation that of the 1,000 members assigned to the American embassy team in Baghdad, only thirty-three of them spoke any Arabic and just six could be considered fluent.³¹ The report noted that this shortfall was "to the detriment of the U.S. mission."³² Therefore, the Group recommended "the highest possible priority" be given to language and culture training for personnel headed

to Iraq, and asserted that the intelligence capability in country needed improvement through language and culture skills.³³ These recommendations seem obvious, but they are especially significant since this report was published toward the end of 2006, more than three and a half years after the start of OIF. Though these requirements became evident in the early stages of the occupation, the United States is still plagued by the challenges of culture in this key battle of the GWOT.

It is also useful to look at the case of the United States Navy to put this issue of cultural competence into context from a Service perspective. As an important first step, the Navy has recognized that language, regional expertise, and culture serve as a "force multiplier in the 21st century security environment."³⁴ The Navy has ninety-eight Foreign Area Officers (FAOs) to date, and will develop fifty FAOs per year.³⁵ By 2015, the Navy plans to have 300 FAOs with 100 students in the training pipeline.³⁶ In addition, the Naval Postgraduate School currently offers a Region Security Education Program, the Naval War College offers regional-focused areas of study in its elective curricula, and the United States Naval Academy will award its first foreign language degree in 2010.³⁷

However, the Navy does not yet know its actual FAO requirements; it is simply training as many as it can under the resource and facility constraints. The Navy received only one million dollars in 2007 for such training, and is scheduled to receive a five percent increase each year over the next five years.³⁸ This meager investment is not guaranteed to produce returns since there is no active duty service commitment associated with FAO training or duty.³⁹ Though the Navy has a functioning FAO program and is addressing language training and regional study in its education system, its level of effort is not based on validated requirements. The target of 300 certified FAOs by 2015 may or may not meet the

needs of the fleet; it is merely the amount that the Navy has allocated the funding to support.

In the case of the Army, the FAO program suffers from two prominent weaknesses. First, the current distribution of FAO billets is patterned after the Cold War, with most of the billets supporting Europe and Latin America.⁴⁰ Besides the overall need for increasing the number of FAO billets, the international security environment necessitates a redistribution of these billets with a greater focus on the Middle East, China, Africa, and Southeast Asia in order "to ensure that the pointed end of the spear points in the right direction."⁴¹ Second, the FAO program had developed an "attaché-centric point of view" rather than applying these capabilities in support of GCC staffs or in-theater commands.⁴² Better management of these specialists is critical to maximizing their utility at the operational level.

Capturing the Deficiencies

These examples highlight many of the key shortcomings of the current initiatives. First and foremost, the amount of resources committed to developing cultural competence does not match the level of importance outlined in the highest level documents analyzed above. If the United States truly considers these capabilities to be force multipliers in the 21st century international security environment, then the resources to develop these capabilities should reflect that view. To date, the level of fiscal commitment has indicated that this is seen merely as a fad and that the recent initiatives represent a minimum of effort in order to deflect the criticisms of cultural deficiencies related to the conflict in Iraq. In the on-going operations in Iraq, there are still documented shortfalls of language skills and cultural expertise, and the supply will not catch up to the demand in the foreseeable future.

Second, most of the focus of these initiatives is on foreign language proficiency. While these skills are critical, the need for cultural understanding and regional expertise is

just as important; as discussed in the opening paragraph of this paper, cultural competence must include language skills and cultural expertise. More Arabic and Farsi speakers would certainly help the GWOT, but cultural understanding is critical to achieving effects at the operational level. Language proficiency without cultural expertise is only a fifty percent solution.

Third, the United States must place greater emphasis on cultural competence among its personnel, and most importantly among its intelligence officers. Knowing your enemy requires more than just detailing his order of battle and identifying targets, it must also include understanding what the people and their leaders believe and how they perceive events. It is about persuading decision makers and influencing societies. Analyzing these factors and developing ways to exploit them requires cultural competence. GCCs need personnel with various specialties on their staffs who have this competence, but especially their intelligence officers who can then fuse the enemy order of battle and cultural tendencies in order to assess intentions and make more accurate determinations of the enemy's possible courses of action.

Finally, emphasizing culture in joint doctrine and the operational planning process is imperative. The Joint Staff must commit more of a concerted effort in this area. It is evident that a "check the box" mentality was applied in the most recent revisions, as nearly identical paragraphs on language and regional expertise were inserted into the most recent versions of Joint Publications 3-0 and 5-0. The credibility of the commitment to cultural competence is suspect when this critical capability is barely mentioned in passing in these important doctrine documents and often overlooked in the operational planning process.

The Path to Effectiveness

To address these requirements, the following paragraphs outline recommendations for improving the cultural competence of the United States armed forces in order to enhance effectiveness at the operational level. The first priority is to commit the resources necessary, not just those the Services can afford, to develop a culture-focused force. To do this, the Department of Defense must emphasize cultural competence education. Currently, all Services use graduate degrees as a distinguishing factor for promotion at one point or another in an officer's career. This paper recommends the Department of Defense maximize the cultural utility of these additional degrees by restricting the programs for which the Services can provide tuition assistance.

By 2008, the Department should allow tuition assistance only for those programs with a focus on enhancing cultural competence, including bachelor's degree programs in critical foreign languages or master's degree programs in international relations or regional studies. Of course, the Services will have to accommodate a waiver process for those few cases when it makes sense to support other degree programs, like for scientists, judge advocates, medical personnel, and others as appropriate. Also by 2008, the Department should require all Services to make information available to promotion boards at all levels on the degrees earned by an officer and any foreign language proficiency scores, with greater emphasis on the foreign languages critical to national security. Tying promotion to cultural competence will provide additional incentive for officers to pursue these educational opportunities, which the foreign language proficiency pay is not currently achieving at the necessary rate.

The second priority is to enhance the FAO program by increasing the number of FAOs, redistributing the FAO billets to address the regions of greater concern, increasing the

emphasis on cultural understanding, and improving career management of these specialists by establishing a five-year minimum active duty service commitment following FAO certification. The initial step should involve immediately developing cultural competence among more intelligence officers in all Services, in the form of FAO-like training with a heavier emphasis on regional expertise than on linguistic skills. Next, the Services should guarantee all "graduates" of an FAO-like program the opportunity to attend PME in residence, at both the intermediate and senior developmental levels. The combination of regional expertise and an understanding of operational art and the Joint Operational Planning Process will create a vital asset at the operational level. Moreover, those who manage the careers of these specialists must put greater attention to plotting an effective path of progression to ensure that the FAOs are employed to support GCC operations and are developed through PME at the right times.

The third priority is to resource the GCC staffs with more culturally competent officers. By 2012, the Joint Staff should require all intelligence officers assigned to a GCC J2 staff to be "graduates" of an FAO-like program for one of the countries or regions in that GCC's area of responsibility. In addition, by 2008 the Joint Staff should establish a culture advisory team in each GCC, modeled after the Office for Operational Cultural Knowledge suggested in the article titled, "An Organizational Solution for DOD's Cultural Knowledge Needs."⁴³ Unlike that organization, which would reside at OSD, the cultural advisory teams would work directly for the GCCs.⁴⁴ These cultural advisory teams could provide similar services as proposed for the Office for Operational Cultural Knowledge, including cultural research for education and war-gaming; pre-deployment training programs and PME curriculum development; and cultural preparation of the operating environment, which could

include a database of tribes, religions, languages, and other demographics to assist operational commanders and planners.⁴⁵

To ensure these cultural advisory teams have the requisite expertise, they should include FAOs, civilian country experts, and international officers who are graduates from PME institutions in the United States. These international officers have by far more expertise on their native countries and the neighboring region than any American officers. To take advantage of the cultural and regional expertise of these international officers, this paper suggests changing the program so that the international officers incur at least a one-year follow-on assignment to the appropriate GCC staff after they graduate from one of the intermediate- or senior-level PME programs in the United States. The GCCs need and deserve these means to integrate cultural competence into their operations.

Finally, the Joint Staff must address the lack of cultural concepts in doctrine and the operational planning process. If the Joint Staff follows the recommendation above to create cultural advisory teams at each GCC, the Joint Staff could use these experts to suggest additional language to key joint publications, especially 2-0 (Intelligence), 3-0 (Operations), and 5-0 (Operation Planning). By also adding a "cultural assessment" section to all CJCS and GCC Warning Orders, Planning Orders, and Operations Orders, the Joint Staff could help focus the efforts of the planning teams on important cultural factors in analyzing friendly and enemy centers of gravity and developing courses of action. From the author's experience, it is very easy for a planning team to overlook a variety of factors in the operational planning process if specific verbiage regarding those factors is not included in orders from higher commands.

Conclusion

The opening paragraph of this paper asserted that cultural competence at the operational level is a critical weakness for the United States. The GWOT and OIF are merely recent examples that demonstrate this reality. Enemies recognize the conventional military superiority of the United States, and neutralize that advantage through asymmetric means. To borrow a phrase from the sport of golf, the United States needs a better "short game" to address the international security environment of the 21st century. Today's security challenges require greater finesse, particularly in the form of cultural competence. Over-emphasis on technological transformation to make the joint force lighter, leaner, and more lethal has created severe atrophy in the intangible factors of war, especially the use of soft power at the operational level of war to understand the enemy and influence decision makers. This is a trend that the Department of Defense must reverse immediately. Developing cultural competence to enhance operational effectiveness is a critical first step.

Though recent national initiatives attempt to address the deficiencies in language skills and regional expertise, these initiatives fail to go far enough to enable GCCs. The United States must commit greater resources toward developing a culture-focused force and managing cultural specialists in such a way to maximize their value at the operational level. GCCs need these experts in order to exploit the effects that cultural competence can achieve in creating greater unity of effort among international partners and developing operations plans that anticipate cultural challenges. Anything short of these additional actions will likely result in a repeat of the situation in Iraq for future conflicts: winning the conventional battle, but struggling to secure the peace.

As Dr. Milan Vego points out, "the human element is the key in any war."⁴⁶ Cultural factors are critical components of this human element. Advanced weapon systems and technical innovations do not guarantee success and may not have utility in every military operation. However, cultural competence at the operational level can always serve as a force multiplier to ensure greater stability and security around the world and, ultimately, save the lives of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines.

NOTES

¹ Department of Defense, *The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington DC, March 2005), 5.

² John P. Coles, "Cultural Intelligence & Joint Intelligence Doctrine," *Joint Operations Review*, (2005): 3.

³ David J. Kilcullen, "Countering Global Insurgency," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 28, no. 4 (August 2005): 613.

⁴ The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington DC, March 2006), 1.

⁵ Department of Defense, 5.

⁶ Robert H. Scales Jr., "Culture-Centric Warfare," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, vol. 130, iss. 10 (October 2004): 33

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 584.

¹¹ Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2006), 73.

¹² Ibid., 103.

¹³ Ibid., 115.

¹⁴ Department of Defense, *Defense Language Transformation Roadmap* (Washington DC, January 2005), 3.

¹⁵ Ibid., 1.

¹⁶ Ibid., 15.

¹⁷ Ibid., 5.

¹⁸ Ibid., 16.

¹⁹ *National Security Language Initiative* (Washington DC, January 2006), 1.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., 2-3.

²² Ibid., 5.

²³ *Language and Regional Expertise Planning*. CJCSI 3126.01 (Washington DC, January 2006), 1.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid., B-3.

²⁶ Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington DC, February 2006), 78.

²⁷ Ibid., 15.

²⁸ Ibid., 79.

²⁹ Ibid., A-4-A5.

³⁰ James A. Baker III and Lee H. Hamilton, *The Iraq Study Group Report* (December 2006), 60.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid., 61.

³⁴ Mark Neighbors, *Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture* (March 2007); Lecture of Opportunity provided at the Naval War College. Mr. Neighbors is the Navy Deputy Senior Language Authority (OPNAV/N13F)

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Michael A. Vane and Daniel Fagundes, "Redefining the Foreign Area Officer's Role," *Military Review* (May-June 2004), 18-19.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid., 19.

⁴³ Montgomery McFate and Andrea Jackson, "An Organizational Solution for DOD's Cultural Knowledge Needs," *Military Review* (July-August 2005), 20-21.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Milan N. Vego, *Operational Warfare* (Newport: Naval War College, 2000), 619.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baker, James A. and Hamilton, Lee H. *The Iraq Study Group Report*. December 2006.
- Clausewitz, Carl von. *On War*. Michael Howard and Peter Paret eds. and trans. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989.
- Coles, John P. "Cultural Intelligence & Joint Intelligence Doctrine." *Joint Operations Review*. 2005.
- Kilcullen, David J. "Countering Global Insurgency." *The Journal of Strategic Studies*. vol. 28, no. 4 (August 2005).
- McFate, Montgomery and Jackson, Andrea. "An Organizational Solution for DOD's Cultural Knowledge Needs." *Military Review*. July-August 2005.
- Neighbors, Mark. *Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture*. Lecture of Opportunity provided at the Naval War College. 13 March 2007.
- Ricks, Thomas E. *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2006.
- Scales, Robert H. Jr. "Culture-Centric Warfare." *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*. vol. 130, iss. 10 (October 2004).
- Tzu, Sun. *The Art of War*. Samuel B. Griffith trans. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- United States Department of Defense. *Defense Language Transformation Roadmap*. Washington DC, January 2005.
- United States Department of Defense. *The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America*. Washington DC, March 2005.
- United States Department of Defense. *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*. Washington DC, February 2006.
- Vane, Michael A. and Fagundes, Daniel. "Redefining the Foreign Area Officer's Role." *Military Review*. May-June 2004.
- Vego, Milan N. *Operational Warfare*. Newport, RI: Naval War College, 2000.
- White House, The. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. Washington DC, March 2006.

_____. *Language and Regional Expertise Planning*. CJCSI 3126.01. Washington DC, 23 January 2006.

_____. *National Security Language Initiative*. Washington DC, 5 January 2006.